

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:
 - an illumination input area;
 - an illumination light guide in optical communication with said illumination input area ~~and forming an input light path;~~
 - a read window disposed approximately ~~perpendicularly~~ perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said input light path illumination light guide;
 - a detection guide ~~disposed approximately parallel to said input light path~~ having one end proximate said read window and having a second end forming a detection output, said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide defining a light pathway; and
 - an overillumination redirection component located adjacent to and in optical communication with said illumination input area and said illumination light guide, said overillumination redirection component comprising ~~one or more~~ four overillumination redirection facets disposed ~~at one or more angles relative to said input light path to intersect overilluminating light such that said overilluminating light is directed away from said input light path~~ about an outside perimeter of said illumination light guide, said overillumination redirection facets configured to direct overilluminating light away from said light pathway.
2. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1 ~~wherein said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide comprise a light pathway, said format further comprising an illumination redirection facet in said light pathway between said illumination light guide and said read window, said illumination redirection facet configured to redirect illuminating light along said light pathway.~~

3. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1 ~~wherein said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide comprise a light pathway, said format further comprising a detection redirection facet in said light pathway between said read window and said detection guide, said detection redirection facet configured to redirect detection light along said light pathway.~~

4. (Original) The format of claim 1 further comprising a needle extending outwardly from said read window and adapted to deposit a sample onto said read window.

5. (Original) The format of claim 1 further comprising a dried reagent on said read window.

6. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide has a first cross-sectional area and said detection guide has a second cross-sectional area, said second cross-sectional area being larger than said first cross-sectional area.

7. (Original) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of a unitary piece of optically clear material.

8. (Original) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of separate pieces of optically clear material joined into a single optical format.

9. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1 wherein said ~~one or more~~ overillumination redirection facets are ~~adapted~~ configured to direct ~~light overilluminating said illumination light guide~~ overilluminating light approximately perpendicular to said longitudinal axis of said illumination light guide.

10. (Currently Amended) The format of claim ~~1~~ 9 wherein ~~said one or more overillumination redirection facets is exactly four and further wherein~~ at least two of said overillumination redirection facets are disposed at an approximately 45-degree angle ~~acute angles~~ from said illumination light guide.

11-23. (Cancelled)

24. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 1 ~~wherein said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide comprise a light pathway, said format further comprising an illumination redirection facet in said light pathway between said illumination light guide and said read window, and a detection redirection facet in said light pathway between said read window and said detection guide.~~

25. (Currently Amended) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:

an illumination input area;

an illumination light guide in optical communication with said illumination input area, ~~and forming an input light path~~ said illumination light guide comprising four sides defining an outside perimeter of said illumination light guide and a first illumination end and a second illumination end;

a read window, ~~disposed approximately perpendicularly to said input light path~~ said second illumination end proximate said read window;

a detection guide ~~disposed approximately parallel to said input light path~~ having one end proximate said read window and having a second end forming a detection output; and

~~at least three~~ four overillumination redirection facets located proximate to and in optical communication with said illumination input area and said illumination light guide, ~~said at least three~~ four overillumination redirection facets ~~disposed at one or more angles relative to the input light path to intersect overilluminating light such that said overilluminating light is direct away from said input light path~~ substantially surrounding said outside perimeter of said illumination light guide such that each overillumination redirection facet is adjacent to and in optical communication with a corresponding side of said illumination light guide.

26. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 25 wherein at least ~~one of the least three overilluminating~~ two of said overillumination redirection facets are disposed at approximately 45 degree angles from ~~said illumination input area~~ a longitudinal axis of and ~~adapted to direct overillumination light away from~~ said illumination light guide.

27. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 25 further comprising a needle extending outwardly from said read window and adapted to deposit a sample onto said read window.

28. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 25 further comprising a dried reagent on said read window.

29. (Currently Amended) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:

an illumination input area;

an illumination light guide in optical communication with said illumination input area ~~and forming an input light path~~;

a read window disposed along ~~said input light path~~ a light pathway, wherein said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide ~~comprise a~~ define said light pathway;

a detection guide having one end proximate said read window and having a second end forming a detection output; and

~~one or more~~ four overillumination facets located adjacent to and in optical communication with said illumination input area and said illumination light guide, said overillumination facets disposed at ~~one or more angles~~ at acute angles relative to ~~the input light path~~ said light pathway and configured to direct overilluminating light away from ~~the input light path~~ said light pathway.

30. (Cancelled).

31. (Currently Amended) The format of claim 29 wherein said read window is disposed approximately perpendicular to said ~~input light path~~ light pathway.

32. (Previously Presented) The format of claim 29 wherein said detection guide is disposed approximately parallel to said ~~input light path~~ illumination light guide.

33. (Cancelled).

34. (New) A format for optical analysis of samples, said format comprising:
an illumination light guide having a first illumination end forming an illumination input area, said illumination light guide having an outside perimeter;
a detection guide having a first detection end proximate a read window and a second detection end forming a detection area;
an overillumination redirection component proximate said illumination input area and substantially surrounding said outside perimeter of said illumination light guide, said overillumination redirection component comprising one or more overillumination redirection facets each disposed at an acute angle relative to a light pathway defined by said illumination light guide, said read window, and said detection guide such that said overillumination redirection component is configured to direct overilluminating light away from said light pathway.
35. (New) The format of claim 34, wherein said illumination light guide has a polygonal cross-section comprising a plurality of sides that define said outside perimeter.
36. (New) The format of claim 35, wherein each side borders a corresponding overillumination redirection facet.
37. (New) The format of claim 34 wherein said read window is disposed approximately perpendicular to said light pathway.
38. (New) The format of claim 34 wherein said overillumination redirection component is configured to direct overilluminating light approximately perpendicular to light pathway.
39. (New) The format of claim 34 wherein said format further comprises an illumination redirection facet in said light pathway between said illumination light guide and said read window, and a detection redirection facet in said light pathway between said read window and said detection guide.

40. (New) The format of claim 34 further comprising a needle extending outwardly from said read window and adapted to deposit a sample onto said read window.

41. (New) The format of claim 34 wherein said illumination light guide has a first cross-sectional area and said detection guide has a second cross-sectional area, said second cross-sectional area being larger than said first cross-sectional area.

42. (New) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of a unitary piece of optically clear material.

43. (New) The format of claim 1 wherein said illumination light guide and said detection guide are molded of separate pieces of optically clear material joined into a single optical format.